

EXPLANATORY REMARKS

UPON THE

L I F E

AND

OPINIONS

OF

TRISTRAM SHANDY

WHEREIN

The MORALS and PRINCIPLES of the PIECE
are fully and openly

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ANATOMY

L O N D O N

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EXPLANATORY REMARKS

UPON THE

OPINIONS

OF

FRISTRAM SLANDY;



By Jeremiah Kunkastrop, M.D.

of the Army of the United States

Anonymous

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EXPLANATORY REMARKS
UPON THE
LIFE and OPINIONS
OF
TRISTRAM SHANDY.

CHAP.—I.

IT is the misfortune of all great writers, to put pen to paper so fast, and let their imaginations carry them away in such a hurry, that they seldom consider whether their readers comprehensions will be able to gallop after them post-haste, without being out of breath, to the end of the first chapter, even tho' it should not contain above a

dozen lines. And it is as great an error in judgment, — nay, worse than that which *Byng* was shot for, to put too much wit in any production that is intended for universal reading — I say, universal reading: for, besides the opinion of one of the greatest writers of this or the last age, I cannot say which, “that a reader should have as much wit as the author he reads, to understand him;” — which I flatter myself is seldom the case. I speak as an author, and therefore should be allowed a little vanity: I say, besides this generally received doctrine, how can we tell what different kinds of wit prevail with all the readers in the universe; — to go no further than the antipodes, it is a thousand to one, whether they would understand a pun, or the best *bon-mot* in all *Tristram Shandy*: — and for aught I can tell, in the

the moon, and some other of the illiterate planets, they may have exploded every kind of true wit mentioned by Addison. It is evidently for this reason, that in most of the periodical works, which are reckoned *universal*, and particularly the magazines, we are very seldom troubled with any thing but plain good sense, the best method of making water-gruel, and fattening of capons; which may be of use, and understood all over the world.

CH A P. II.

MY good friend, and arch companion Mr. *Tristram Shandy*, gentlemen, who makes such honourable mention of my learned father, the celebrated doctor *Kunastrokus*, of physical memory,

mory* has fallen into this very mistake that I have just been mentioning ; and, by a certain subtilty of thinking, and quaintness of expression, the beauties and excellencies of his work, may not only be passed over by many of the inhabitants of *Asia-minor*, *Monomotapa*, some of the Mickmacs, Cherokees, and Catawbass, but, at least, by seven hundred and fifty of the inhabitants of *London*, and *Westminster*, the *Borough of Southwark*, and parts adjacent.

This computation, which I did not make myself, may appear at first, somewhat too exact, but the reader may be persuaded I have it from the best authority, — *my printer*, who assures me, I cannot sell more or less than that num-

• Vide pag. 23, vol. I.

ber : I own I was at first of another opinion, and therefore ordered him to print twenty thousand ; but he soon convinced me of my mistake, by the cartloads of waste-paper in his shop, so that I now set down to write for the seven hundred and fifty *incomprehensible readers* of *Tristram Shandy*, in and about the purlicus of this metropolis, — and *no other*.

C H A P III.

TO them be it known, then, that Mr. *Tristram Shandy* is one of the greatest moralists, and most refined politicians this, or any other age whatever has produced.

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

BEFORE we enter upon the illustration of these *round assertions*, it will be necessary to point out the qualifications of a moralist. He should have a fundamental knowledge of *ethics*, or that science which fixes the œconomy and conduct of human Life, that teaches the regulation of the passions, and instructs men to be happy, by practising all the social virtues. He should know how to adapt these rules to the various subjects he treats of, and point out such evident and uncontrovertable conclusions in favour of morality, as every unbiaſſed reader must be sensible of the effect.

CHAP. V.

A Moralift has generally one, two, three, four, five, fix, and ſometimes more things in view. Thoſe of the ſingular number, write for writing's ſake : thoſe of the firſt plural number, invert the rule of œconomy, “ a penny ſaved is a penny got,” and think, that in getting a penny, they do more than ſave one they have not, — ſo that they make writing and eating go hand in hand. The triple number have generally ſome new moral doctrine to broach, and, with the two former con-commitants, add, that of ſelf-opiniated public ſervice. Then come the controvertiſts to theſe, and the recontrovertiſts, with **B**u their

their answers, replies, and rejoinders, *ad infinitum*. — But, before I launch out any further in the definition of a moral writer, I must inform my *seven hundred and fifty* readers that Mr. *Tristram Shandy* is not among any of these classes. — He stands by himself upon the top shelf of ethics, — tho' but in *twelves*, — *unrivalled*, — *inimitable*, — and (to my seven hundred and fifty incomprehensible readers) *incomprehensible*. He must, therefore, be more fully explained than any of the foregoing moralists; — and, for that reason, I allow him best part of the following sheets for his public defence to the *moral world*.

CHAP. VI.

THE first evident mark of Mr. *Tristram's* morals (which indeed is

is no farther than the third page) is what he puts into his mother's mouth upon his father's *regularity* in winding up the house clock. *Regularity* every one knows is the corner-stone of virtue—and virtue is the foundation of morality—Thus far, then, Mr. *Shandy* goes on in a moral track to give us the history of his anti-birth.

But what does the winding up of the clock allude to—and how comes it this thought always entered his mother's head once a month? This he very naturally accounts for by an assemblage of ideas, according to Locke; and whatever it may want in *decency*, he very notably makes up by sound philosophy and his *little men* * in embryo—according

* *Homunculus* singular, *Homunculi* plural.

to the œconomy of human life, and
consistant with moral duties.

C H A P. VII.

IT would be difficult for me, and tedious for my readers, to trace Mr. *Tristram Shandy* through every part of his moral character: I shall therefore confine myself to such traits as are the most striking (tho' not self-evident) and least understood.

Among these the following passage seems next to claim our attention.

“ The rituals direct the baptizing of
“ the child, in case of danger, before
“ it is born; but upon this proviso,
“ that some part or other of the child's
“ body be seen by the baptiser: but the
“ doctors

“ doctors of the Sorbonne, by delibera-
 “ tion, held amongst them April 10,
 “ 1733, have enlarged the powers of
 “ the midwives, by determining, that
 “ though no part of the child’s body
 “ should appear, — that baptism shall
 “ nevertheless be administered to it by
 “ injection by means of a little squirt.
 “ ’Tis very strange that St. Thomas
 “ Aquinas, who had so good a mecha-
 “ nical head, both for tying and untying,
 “ the knots of school-divinity, shou’d,
 “ after so much pains bestowed upon
 “ this—give up the point at last, as a
 “ thing impossible.”

Here follows the question upon bap-
 tism, with the consultation of the doctors
 of the Sorbonne thereupon in French;
 but as Mr. *Shandy* has not favoured us
 with a translation, and as very likely
 some

some of my *incomprehensible* readers may not understand that language, I have rendered it in English.—Those of my readers, who (notwithstanding their *incomprehensibility*) have a smattering of the Gallican tongue, and fancy they comprehend the whole affair in the original, have nothing to do but skip to chapter 9, and fancy there is no such thing as chapter 8 in this *whole* book,—I mean *volume*.

C H A P. VIII.

A Memorial presented to the doctors of the Sorbonne. “ A Surgeon and man-midwife represents to
 “ the gentlemen of the *Sorbonne*, that
 “ there are some cases, though very un-
 “ common, wherein a mother cannot
 “ be

“ be delivered, and when even the child
 “ is so inclosed in the mother’s womb,
 “ that no part of it’s body appears, in
 “ which case, according to the rituals,
 “ baptism should be conferred to it, at
 “ least, upon conditions. The surgeon,
 “ who makes this representation, en-
 “ gages, by means of a syringe, to
 “ baptize immediately the child, with-
 “ out any way hurting the mother.
 “ The question he asks is, whether this
 “ method he proposes, is allowable and
 “ legal, and if he may follow it in a
 “ case parallel to that which he repre-
 “ sents ?”

The answer to the foregoing memo-
 rial :

“ The council is of opinion, that the
 “ question proposed has many difficulties

“ to

“ to be first removed. The theologists
 “ have on one side established a princi-
 “ ple, that baptism, which is a spiritual
 “ birth, supposes a prior birth, we
 “ must be born into the world to be re-
 “ born in *Jesus Christ*, according to their
 “ doctrine. *St. Thomas*, part. 3. quæst.
 “ 88. article 11. follows this opinion as
 “ an established fact: we cannot (says
 “ that holy doctor) baptize children
 “ which are inclosed in their mothers
 “ wombs. By this *St. Thomas* means
 “ these children are not born, and there-
 “ fore cannot be reckoned amongst o-
 “ ther men: from whence he infers
 “ they cannot be the object of an exter-
 “ nal action, to receive thereby the sa-
 “ craments necessary to salvation: *Pu-*
 “ *eri in maternis uteris existentes non-*
 “ *dum prodicerunt in lucem ut cum*
 “ *aliis hominibus vitam ducant, unde*
 “ non

“ non possunt subjici actioni humanæ,
 “ ut per eorum ministerum sacramenta
 “ recipiant ad salutem. The rituals
 “ enforce the practice of what theologi-
 “ gifts have regulated upon those heads
 “ and they unanimously prohibit the bap-
 “ tizing of children which are inclosed in
 “ their mothers wombs, if no part of
 “ their bodies appears. The concur-
 “ rence of the theologists and the ri-
 “ tuals, which are the rules of the dio-
 “ ceses, seems to establish an authority
 “ necessary to answer the present ques-
 “ tion : however, the council of con-
 “ science, considering on the one hand,
 “ that the reasonings of the theologists
 “ is entirely founded upon their desire
 “ of conformity, and that the prohibi-
 “ tion of the rituals, supposes, that chil-
 “ dren so inclosed, cannot be baptized
 “ in their mothers wombs, which is
 “ against the present supposition ; and,

“ on the other hand, considering that
 “ the same theologians teach, that the
 “ Sacraments which *Jesus Christ* has esta-
 “ blished, as the easy, but necessary
 “ means of sanctifying man, may be
 “ hazarded; and besides, supposing that
 “ children inclosed in their mothers
 “ wombs are capable of salvation, as
 “ they are liable to damnation ; upon
 “ these considerations, and having an
 “ eye to the memorial, wherein it is af-
 “ fured, that a certain method is found
 “ out, of baptizing children thus in-
 “ closed, without occasioning the least
 “ prejudice to the mother ; the council
 “ imagines, that the means proposed
 “ may be made use of, in the belief
 “ that God has not left this kind of
 “ children without any resource, and
 “ supposing, according to the represen-
 “ tation, that the means there proposed
 “ are proper to procure them baptism,
 “ never-

“ nevertheless, as by authorizing the
 “ proposed practice, a rule universally
 “ established must be cancelled; the
 “ council thinks, that the memorialist
 “ should make application to his bishop,
 “ whose province it is to judge of the
 “ utility and danger of the method pro-
 “ posed, and as (under the direction of
 “ the bishop) the council thinks that re-
 “ course should be had to the pope, in
 “ whom the right of explaining the laws
 “ of the church, and of derogating
 “ therefrom, where they cannot be ex-
 “ ecuted, is invested : and, however in-
 “ genious and useful the manner of bap-
 “ tism here proposed may be, the council
 “ cannot give their approbation to it,
 “ without the concurrence of these two
 “ authorities. The memorialist is, at
 “ least, advised to apply to his bishop,
 “ and to inform him of the present de-
 “ cision, that in case the prelate should

“ coincide with the reasons, whereupon
 “ the under-signed have founded their
 “ opinions, he may be authorized in
 “ cases of necessity, when too much time
 “ may be lost to ask permission, and
 “ have it granted, for following the
 “ method proposed, so advantageous to
 “ the child’s salvation. The council has
 “ nothing further to add, than, that
 “ notwithstanding they believe this me-
 “ thod may be pursued, are neverthe-
 “ less of opinion, that in case the chil-
 “ dren in question should come into the
 “ world, contrary to the expectation of
 “ those who have used this method, it
 “ would be necessary to baptize them
 “ upon condition ; and this is conform-
 “ able to all the rituals, which in autho-
 “ rizing the baptism of a child, some part
 “ of whose body appears, enjoins at the
 “ same time, and orders it’s baptism
 upon

“ upon condition, in case it comes happily
“ into the world.”

Deliberated in the Sorbonne, the 10th of
April, 1733.

A. LE MOYNE,
L. DE ROMIGNY,
DE MARCILLY.

C H A P. IX.

I Suppose, by this time every one of
my readers (French readers, or En-
glish readers) understands clearly and
perspicuously, the representation or me-
morial of the French man-midwife, and
the answer of the doctors of the Sorbonne
thereto ; and in this opinion too (before
any English translation is given) Mr.
Tristram Shandy gives his compliments to
those doctors, in the following words,

“ Mr.

“ Mr. *Tristram Shandy*’s compliments
 “ to Messrs. *Le Moyne*, *De Romigny* and
 “ *De Marcilly*, hopes they all rested well
 “ the night after so tiresome a consulta-
 “ tion. — He begs to know, whether,
 “ after the ceremony of marriage, and
 “ before that of consummation, the bap-
 “ tizing all the HOMUNCULI at once,
 “ flap-dash, by injection, would not be
 “ a shorter and safer cut still ; on con-
 “ dition, as above, that if the Ho-
 “ MUNCULI do well, and come safe into
 “ the world after this, that each and
 “ every of them shall be baptized again
 “ (on condition) — and provided, in
 “ the second place, that the thing can
 “ be done, which Mr. *Shandy* appre-
 “ hends it may, by means of a syringe,
 “ and without any prejudice to the fa-
 “ ther.”

This

This, and the foregoing passages, are what I propose labouring hard to rescue from the claws of *moral* (though *pseudo*) *critics*, who would insinuate, that they are not only directly *inconsistent* with all morality, but evidently *antichristian*. As to you, my worthy (*though incomprehensible*) readers, I dare say, no such thoughts ever entered your brain, nor indeed how should they, for what immorality can there be in giving the substance of a *theological* dispute, especially when every thing that can possibly give offence is expressed in a foreign tongue?

The latter part of this conclusion, or query, or whatever you please to call it, I do not so much insist upon, as in that case I should share the guilt, if there were any, with my friend *Tristram Shandy*,

Shandy, for having exposed him in English. Therefore, having said *all I can say*, in defence of his morals and orthodoxy, in this respect, I beg you will conclude with me, that in this part he no way deviates from his general moral character.

This, I think, is reasoning (ay, and sound reasoning too) enough for one chapter — and so we proceed to the next.

C H A P. X.

THIS chapter, though entirely upon *modesty*, cannot properly be called a *modest chapter*, notwithstanding there is very little of the author's vanity in

in it : therefore any of my *seven hundred and fifty* readers (being females) may pass it over, if they chuse it, and my lazy readers in particular, (of either gender, the epicene not excluded) are carefully recommended to avoid it, as perhaps after all they will have occasion to recur to a dictionary, or be obliged to say their A, B, C, numerically before they understand it.

—— “ Then it can be out of nothing
 “ in the world, quoth my uncle *Toby*,
 “ in the simplicity of his heart — but
 “ **MODESTY.**—My sister, I dare say,
 “ added he, does not care to let a man
 “ come so near her *****.” *

One would be inclined to imagine,
 that a man of my friend *Tristram's* strict

* Vide p. 47. vol. 2.

D

morals

morals had concluded the sentence before the asterisks, and that they were a meer error of the press, though they had run through two editions, if he had not immediately after added :

—“ My sister, may hap,” quoth my uncle *Toby*, “ does not chuse to let a
 “ man come so near her ****, make
 “ this dash,—’tis an aposiopesis—Take
 “ the dash away, and write *backside* —
 “ ’tis bawdy. —Scratch *backside* out,
 “ and put cover’d way in,—’tis a meta-
 “ phor ;—and I dare say, as fortification
 “ ran so much in my uncle *Toby*’s head,
 “ that if he had been left to have added
 “ one word to the sentence,—that word
 “ was it.” †

† Vide p. 49. vol. 2.

Notwith-

Notwithstanding my strict reliance upon *Tristram's* veracity, and my great opinion of his uncle Toby's purity of expression, I cannot be induced to believe that his uncle Toby either said *backside*, *bawdy* or not *bawdy*, or was metaphorically inclined to express himself in a *covered way*.—Naked truth, I believe, he thought the best—four *asterisks* are but four *asterisks* — and ever since asterisks have been in use, we have always been taught that their number should be supplied by a like number of letters to make out the sense.

Curious, indefatigable, unblushing readers, consider what letters will properly supply the place, without infringing upon the sense.—Mind I have already exploded uncle *Toby's* “backside” and “covered way.”—What do you think

of head? there are but four letters in this word—Ay, but it will not do, it is quite *opposite* to the author's meaning.—*Arm* and *leg* have but three letters, and be hanged to them.—*Thigh* comes near it, but then there is a letter too many.—I have it—the *third*, the *twentieth*, the *thirteenth*, and the *nineteenth* letters of the English alphabet certainly compose the word, though it is not to be found in any Lexicon extant—I hope.

C H A P. XI.

THIS chapter I intend to devote entirely to *hobby horses*.

A hobby-horse is a machine which boys (ay, and girls too) frequently sit astride upon, and which going up and down affords them much amusement.

Mr.

Mr. *Tristram Shandy's* hobby-horse I take to be ****, (four asterisks) as explained Chap. X. and his favourite argument the *argumentum ad rem*, as he applies it in page 139, volume the 1st of his work.

My *hobby-horse* is a *goose quill*, upon which I have rode through life to this period, and by which I hope to get *hobby-horsically* to my journey's end without much fatigue.

N. B. My hobby-horse never goes on so briskly as upon a journey of prescriptions and receipts--for, instead of paying upon the first road, I receive toll; and the last excursion I seldom make but for the sale of some young *hobby*, the offspring of my *goose quill*, which never stumbles without I meet with a lady, when
I get

I get out of the way of the two first syllables of my name, and canter on simple *Strokus*—though to be sure there is no more resemblance between a K and a C, than there is between my *bobby-horse* and a lady's *pad*.

C H A P XII.

THE foregoing chapters will give my readers a very competent idea of Mr. *Tristram Sbandy*'s morality and religion; for though there may be some few slips of the pen, particularly where the four asterisks are left to supply the place of a word, the drift of this work evidently appears to be *moral* and *orthodox*, particularly the last, which is manifestly evinced by his scheme of baptizing, *slap dash* (to use his own words) all mankind

kind, even before they are born, and thereby prevent any heretical, or schismatical opinions (except in matters of faith) whatever.

C H A P. XIII.

I AM now going to consider my friend *Tristram Shandy* as a politician—or rather, as he is considered by the greatest politicians of *Europe, Asia, Africa, and America*.

This, it must be owned, is an arduous task ; — but my title page is already printed, and I cannot deviate from it ; but before I begin, I make this solemn protestation, that if any of the writers of our weekly political papers, either composed of a sheet and a half, to avoid the
payment

payment of duty, — or in the form of a journal, whereby a whole week's news is, besides a political essay, sucked in at the easy charge of two-pence half-penny, — or in the shape of a chronicle, where piracies do manifestly abound : — I say, if any printers, publishers, editors, compilers, writers, authors, — whether garet-teers, first floorers, house-keepers, chariot-keepers, shop-keepers, stall-keepers, or cellar-keepers — hawkers, and chapmen, do, in manifest opposition to this my will, dare to borrow, rob, steal, quote, cite, mention, hint — (except in my own genteel advertisement) *from, of, or that* — — there is such a book in *esse* as this present volume — I hereby declare solemnly — — — *I believe I shall prosecute them*; — and that I certainly will never give them, or either of them, respectively, a good introductory letter, or essay,
 or

or so much as a paragraph, or hint, concerning such things as no one else can be acquainted with but myself, — those are my *ideas*: nay, I furthermore declare, --- I will never read, peruse, *run-over*, or look upon, in any light whatever, their papers, &c. &c. &c. respectively; --- but give my opinion --- which goes a great way (with *myself*) right or wrong, --- and damn them all.

N. B. Every part of this, and these foregoing chapters, extends to all the magazines (which I did intend to allot a chapter to enumerate) as well as the *reviews*, — without they make very favourable mention of me, and this my elaborate work.

C H A P. XIV.

A Politician is truly an amphibious animal, --- and in England he is more inclined to the *herring* than the *monkey*; --- it is quite otherwise in *France*, where it is more requisite for a professed politicians to have learnt to dance, than to have read *Machiavel*, for his arguments are better enforced by a *caper*, --- a *pas grave*, or a *baloné*, than by the most Syllogistic logic of all the schools, *Un politique de Paris*, (that is, a Paris politician) enters a coffee room with a *pas de passe pié*, makes three *entrechæ* at the front looking-glass, goes up to the group, tells them, with a significant air, “ nous
 “ F——ns bien le tour aux Anglois
 “ cette campagne — ces fiers insulaires
 “ sauront, bien tôt faire respect au genie
 “ militaire

“ militaire de la France,”* — he cuts two capers and retires, whilst the multitude are admiring his profound knowledge of the interest of princes, and every one agrees, that “ Monsieur a bien raison,” “ the orator was quite in the right.”

CH A P. XV.

IN *England*, every coffee-house has its president, who harrangues the circle that catch his opinions, and support them in their different districts. — “ Why, “ Sir, I repeat it, what have we to do “ with continental connections? — Are “ not our ships, our floating bulwarks,

* “ We shall play the devil with the *English* this “ campaign. Those haughty islanders will soon be “ taught to respect the military genius of *France*.”

“ our only protection ? — Could the
 “ king of ———, in return for all the
 “ assistance we have given him, have
 “ made such a diversion as the brave
 “ captain *Elliot* did, in *St. George’s* chan-
 “ nel ? I say, Sir, would all the german
 princes put together, have defeated *Thu-*
 “ *rot* ? Is not our trade, and our navi-
 “ gation, the subject of this war, — and
 “ what is our navigation to the *inland parts*
 “ of *Germany* ? --- *trifling*, --- I repeat it *very*
 “ *trifling*. And yet neglect the herring
 “ fishery, --- that *Peruvian* sea-mine ! and
 “ scarce pay any attention to those ela-
 “ borate and well digested schemes of
 “ the great *Henriques* !” — The learn-
 ed, deep sighted, clear witted, eloquent
 president of ——— coffee-house, after
 having made this *popular* and sagacious
 harrangue — laid hold of my worthy
 friend *Mr. Tristram Shandy*, — “ Here,
 “ (says he) here is the man after my
 “ own

“ own heart, — whose political notions
 “ are as clear and self-evident as my
 “ own. --- There is the touchstone of
 “ public measures, --- the whetstone of
 “ trade and navigation, and the grind-
 “ stone of malversation.”

C H A P. XVI.

SOME of my incomprehensible readers may be greatly surprized, at finding themselves got into such unexpected good company and being conveyed, even without a passport (whilst we are in the midst of a war with *France*) from *London* to *Paris*, there dip into a political conversation with one of their greatest politicians; got back safe to *England*, without being put into the Bastile, for dissenting with him in his political opinions, and holding

holding *French* faith, *French* generals, *French* admirals, as well as *French* ministers, in the highest contempt; then transported into one of our most oratorical coffee-houses, and become auditors to a second *Cicero*, and a third *Demosthenes*.

All this shall be explained to you in a few words. --- It was necessary --- how else could I have illustrated my assertion, that a *politician* is an *amphibious animal*? — How else could I have demonstrated, that he has more of the monkey in him in *France*, and more of the *herring* in him in *England*? As to the Parisian, we dropt him a chapter or two ago, but we have not yet done with *Cicero* or *Demosthenes* (which ever you please to call him.) You shall have some more conversation with him presently; and take my word for it, he is, abstracted from oratory, a very shrewd, sensible fellow, and accord-

ing

ing to the common saying, “ sees as far
“ into a mill-stone as another man.”

C H A P. XVII.

IT may be necessary to inform some of
my readers, that we are not yet got
out of ——— coffee-house, in ———
street :—No—here we are yet, as atten-
tive as ever to Mr. *Profound*, (that is the
gentleman’s name in the black full bot-
tom wig, and the green spectacles) who
has by this time thrown down a dish
of coffee in enforcing his argument upon
the *touch-stones*, *whet-stones*, and *grind-
stones*; taken two pinches of snuff, and
opened *Tristram Shandy* exactly at page
135.

Was

“ Was I an absolute prince, he would
 “ say, pulling up his breeches with both
 “ his hands, as he rose from his arm
 “ chair, I would appoint able judges at
 “ every avenue of my metropolis, who
 “ should take cognizance of every fools
 “ business who came there,—and if, up-
 “ on a fair and candid hearing, it ap-
 “ peared not of weight sufficient to leave
 “ his own home and come up, bag and
 “ baggage, with his wife and children,
 “ farmers sons, &c. &c. at his back,
 “ they should all be sent back, from
 “ constable to constable, like vagrants
 “ as they were, to the place of their le-
 “ gal settlements. By this means I shall
 “ take care that my metropolis tottered
 “ not through its own weight, that the
 “ head be no longer too big for the
 “ body; that the extremes now wasted,
 “ and pin’d in, be restored to their due
 “ share

“ share of nourishment, and regain with
 “ it their natural strength and beauty :
 “ —I would effectually provide that the
 “ meadows and corn fields of my domi-
 “ nions should laugh and sing.” Oh
 excellent metaphor, cried Mr. *Pro-*
found, (in extasy) worthy of the great
 pen from whence it flows ! — “ That
 “ good cheer and hospitality flourish
 “ once more ; — and that such weight
 “ and influence be put thereby into the
 “ hands of the squirality of my king-
 “ dom, as should counterpoise what I
 “ perceive my nobility are now taking
 “ from them.” Great—Great *Tristram* !
 — and see how elegantly he illustrates
 this immediately after.

“ Why are there so few palaces and
 “ gentlemens seats, he would ask, with
 “ some emotion, as he walked across
 F “ the

“ the room, throughout so many delici-
 “ ous provinces in *France*? whence is
 “ it that the few remaining chateaus a-
 “ mongst them are so dismantled, so un-
 “ furnished, and in so ruinous and deso-
 “ late a condition? — Because, Sir, he
 “ would say, in that kingdom no man
 “ has any country interest to support;—
 “ the little interest of any kind, which
 “ any man has any where in it, is con-
 “ centrated in the court, and the looks
 “ of the grand monarch, by the sun-
 “ shine of whose countenance, or the
 “ clouds, which pass across it, every
 “ French man lives or dies.”

Here Mr. *Profound* made a pause,
 after which — he addressed himself to us
 — Well, gentlemen, what do you think
 of this great political writer—you may
 talk of your Machiavel's, and your Som-
 mers's,

mers's, and your Burnet's — But what are they when compared to him : how clearly he states the case when he has a mind for it, and then again when he chuses to screen himself in a kind of parable, how elegantly he does it. “ Another political reason (says *Tristram*) prompted my father so strongly to guard against the least evil accident in my mother's lying-in in the country, — was, That any such instance would infallibly throw a balance of power, too great already, into the weaker vessels of the gentry, in his own or higher stations ; — which, with the many usurped rights which that part of the constitution was hourly establishing, — would, in the end, prove fatal to the monarchical system of domestic government established in the first creation of things by God.”

What

What can he mean here, (resumed Mr. *Profound*) but pecuniary influence in elections, particularly in boroughs? and yet there is not one in a hundred takes it in that sense. I tell you, gentlemen, *Tristram Shandy* is one compleat system of modern politics, and that to understand him, there is as much occasion for a key, as there is for a catalogue to the Harleian library: I own, that I should not myself have penetrated so far as I have, notwithstanding my great reading in works of this nature, if I had not had the opportunity of supping the other evening with the author, who let me into the whole affair. I advised him to publish a key, but he told me it was too dangerous.—What is the Siege of *Namur*, which he often mentions, but the Siege of Fort St. Philip's in Minorca?

norca? — or, the wound his uncle Toby received there but the distress the nation was thrown into thereupon? His application to the study of fortification, and the knowledge he therein gained, means nothing else but the rectitude and clear sightedness of the administration which afterwards took up the reins of government. This is a master piece of allegory, beyond all the poets of this or any period whatever. There is but one fault to be found with Mr. *Tristram Shandy* as a politician—that is making *Yorick's* horse so lean—but then he *is armed at all points*—I think too he should have told us the horse was white, to have made the symbolical application: — but he did not dare declare himself so openly upon this head—he told me so. Gentlemen, (continued he) I will only read to you one passage more, and leave you to make your

your remarks——“ In a word, he would
 “ say, error was error, no matter where
 “ it fell, whether in a fraction or a
 “ pound—’twas alike fatal to truth, and
 “ she was kept down at the bottom of
 “ her well as inevitably by a mistake in
 “ the dust of a butterfly’s wing—as in
 “ the disk of the sun, the moon, and all
 “ the stars of heaven put together.—
 “ He would often lament that it was for
 “ want of considering this properly;
 “ and of applying it skilfully to civil
 “ matters, as well as to speculative
 “ truths, that so many things in this
 “ world were;—that the political arch
 “ was giving way,” (do you observe,
 gentlemen, how forcibly he speaks here)
 “ and that the very foundation of our
 “ excellent constitution in church and
 “ state were so sapped as estimators re-
 “ ported.”

C H A P. XVIII.

WHEN Mr. *Profound* had got thus far, a fit of coughing took him, which I was apprehensive would very near have carried him off.—I waited with great patience near a quarter of an hour till he had recovered himself, in expectation of having gained from him an explanation of this passage, which he certainly would have given, notwithstanding he told us in the beginning he would leave us to our own reflections; but how unluckily mortifying was it, both for you and me, readers, that after the fit left him, there was not a sufficient number of auditors remaining to form a committee, and Mr. *Profound* went away as much out of temper with his cough as with his company.

pany. I have regularly attended the house for above a fortnight past, in expectation of meeting him, when (tears speak my grief!) I yesterday learned he died the night before — and all my hopes of an explanation of this passage are at an end.

I propose erecting here a monument to the memory of *Profound*, in the same manner as *Tristram* has to that of *Yorick*.

Alas, poor PROFOUND!

I have just received the mortifying news, that my printer has never a *black copper-*

copper-plate to subjoin ; but I have desired him to borrow *Tristram's* of his printer, and if he will but lend it, you may depend upon being as well *amused* and *enlightened* here, as you were in reading the *seventy third* and *seven fourth* pages of the 1st volume of *Tristram Shandy*.

C H A P. XIX.

I Told you, incomprehensible readers (you know your number by this time) what a clever fellow *Profound* was, so that I hope you did not lose a word that he said ; but if you think that there was only a single syllable that you did not attend to, I insist upon your returning back to the three preceding chapters, as you will swear, else, I have not fulfilled the promise of my title page, “ ex-
 G “ plaining

“plaining the politics of *Tristram*,” which can be done no other way, than in the words of my deceased friend. Friend ! did I say ? Yes, I repeat it, a *great friend* ! and what is more and difficult to believe, a *political friend* ! who has enabled me to throw such light upon our author, and clear the understandings of seven hundred and fifty incomprehensible readers.

CHAP. XX.

THUS much for Mr. *Tristram*
Shandy's politics.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXI.

SOME of the most comprehensible of my readers must have observed, that I have scattered very little Greek and Latin about this work, and that I have even made shift with an *English motto*, notwithstanding a classical one is so essential to the well understanding and recommending a book, even though of this consequence. — To be honest, I must own, that none of the family of the *Kunastrokius's* were any great Grecians, — and, as to *Latin*, I always found it a very saleable commodity at the *physical-market*. But if any of my readers should be desirous to divert themselves with a Greek or Latin quotation, I would advise them to read me with *Homer*, *Herodotus*, *Virgil*, *Horace*, and a few more of

the classics by their sides, and if they understand them, *not else*, — they have nothing to do, but now and then dip into one or other of them, and please themselves, and save me a great deal of unnecessary trouble.

C H A P. XXII.

THIS chapter is intirely upon *propriety*, and must, therefore, of course, (with or without a *pun*) be a very proper chapter.

Digressions are the soul of a work, as Mr. *Frisfram Shandy* has very judiciously discovered, and he has as tenaciously adhered to this discovery; — wherefore, he may, with the greatest propriety, be stiled the king of *episodical writers*.

As

As to absurdities, it is absurd to suppose, there can be any in a work of *humour*, — true humour I mean. — I appeal to all and every one of my *incomprehensible readers*, if there be any absurdity in the work now before them : --- I will answer for you all in one word --- none. In regard to my friend *Tristram*, what are generally reckoned absurdities in him, are his greatest beauties --- Though he *ridicules* plates and cuts by a *ridiculous* stamp, may he not, with great propriety prefix a frontispiece to his second edition ? — Every one must own, that a frontispiece, when executed by a masterly hand, is an embellishment to a work ; --- and who can be so out of the way, as to find fault with an embellishment, which evidently enhances the value of the production ?

Again,

Again, with respect to dedications.— Though that in the middle of his first volume certainly means (if any thing) a burlesque upon dedications of what nature so ever, yet we find in his second edition, he has dedicated this moral-political (not *bawdy*, *ludicrous*, as some may imagine it) piece, to one of the most respectable characters in *England*. — But *who* can take offence at it ?

What I have said in this chapter concerning Mr. *Tristram Shandy's* propriety, sets some of the mistaken errors of that work in the clearest points of light, in which my readers (incomprehensible as they are) must certainly view them.

C H A P. XXIII.

LIKE most other writers, when I have nothing more to say, I draw near a conclusion ; but as it is necessary, for several reasons which I could explain if I chose (but not having promised it in my title page I am not compelled to it,) to eke out another chapter, I must say something, if it be only to contradict what I have hitherto said ;—but this I shall not do, and so continue as follows :

If, after all, I have not sufficiently cleared my friend *Tristram Shandy*, from any attacks of the false critics, for want of morals, or for any small heresy in politics : — no part of this can be laid to his charge, — as he was then *unborn*, as he still remains, in a *literal sense*.

But

But to wave all considerations of this nature, my readers, as incomprehensible as they are, must have perceived e'er now, that *Tristram Shandy* is the most *excellent* (I was going to say — *est*, by way of a *superlative superlative*, suitable to the occasion) piece that has appeared for many years ; besides, according to *Hu-*
bras, —

—— The worth of every thing,
Is just as much as it will bring, —
and this is the dearest production to the bookseller, if *not* to the public, that has appeared for near half a centry.

A D V E R -

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to

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to them in due time ; — but I am afraid
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F I N I S.



